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The MINISTER'S QUARTERLY

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Issued In the Interest of The Parish Ministry

It's Time to Renew

"In our society every institution is exposed to a daily plebiscite," says President de Kieweit of the University of Rochester.

With this issue we invite your vote for the continuance of THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY. Your vote is your subscription. Will you fill out the enclosed subscription card and mail it with your dollar to 287 Fourth Avenue, New York?

Let's Shake a Shibboleth

A shibboleth is a test, a criterion. We think it is past time to shake one shibboleth which has long been offered young men who manifest some interest in the ministry; namely, "Don't go into the ministry if you could possibly be happy doing anything else."

Even if this criterion had any substantial validity in the first place (we think 90% of the men serving our churches today could be happy and successful in other fields), we can no longer afford its luxury.

The competition for competent man-power in every area of American life is at an all-time high. Pick up a copy of the Sunday NEW YORK TIMES and read the advertisements crying for scientists, executives, salesmen. The professional journals in the social sciences reflect a comparable demand.

Said a prominent New York business executive in a recent address to top management, "The pivotal problem facing business today is a man-power shortage that is worsening because of the increased velocity in other aspects of the economy—transportation, automation, research, electronics and the art of management."

We suggest that the pivotal problem facing the Church today and one that is bound to grow in dimensions is man-power also. Business, science, industry, the professions, the Church are all in the same labor market.

We need consequently, to eliminate stumbling blocks, not raise them. A young man is no less "called" to the ministry if he is carefully persuaded of its abiding satisfactions by some seasoned elder. This is not to say that we may neglect to honestly describe its pitfalls and problems. But no profession has a corner on these.

It may constitute something of a measurement of the effectiveness of our own ministries: how many competent young people we start toward church vocations.

For all the trials of the ministerial professions, let us affirm that the rewards more than compensate. It is a striking testimony, incidentally, that very rarely do those, who having put their hands to the plow, turn back.

W. C. H.

Comment

—from our readers

On "Wedding Music"

I read with real interest Margaret Westlake Powers' article, "Music for the Wedding," in the October issue of the Quarterly. With most of it I am in full accord. I do wish, however, to contend with her about the use of Wagner's and Mendelssohn's marches in the wedding ceremony.

Mrs. Powers criticizes these two marches as secular compositions, and hence not fitted for Christian weddings. It is of course true that they were written as secular music, but has not hallowed usage over many, many years actually made them sacred? With the exception of the few who go to the opera, the great majority of people never hear those marches except in Church, at a Christian wedding. There is a great difference between the use of these marches and such songs as "Because," for the marches contain no lyrics which would clash with our Christian convictions.

I have been told that Bach's Passion Chorale (O Sacred Head, Now Wounded) was adapted from a German drinking song tune. Why may not the Church take and sanctify something that comes from secular sources, and make it sacred? Perhaps my taste is poor, but for myself, Wagner's and Mendelssohn's great marches have religious significance, and are thus well fitted for use in Christian weddings.

KENNETH A. COATES
El Cerrito, Calif.

On "Baptism" and "Communion"

I, for one, am in favor of doing away with infant baptism as not in keeping with scripture, or in keeping with our meaning of baptism. It is my observation that many of our churches have given it up—although they have retained its form—by making it into a rather cute and innocuous ceremony in which the parents are reminded to be good parents and to send the child to Sunday School. However, as long as "it is our custom to administer baptism to children in infancy" (P. 127, "A Book of Worship for Free Churches"), it does seem that Mr. Coe must give some reason why we should turn away from the Lord's table some of the members of "the household of faith."

In conclusion, it does seem to me that there is a problem here in refusing children communion that may be larger than is apparent when we dismiss it with a "And of course, they should wait." It is just as logical to say, "and of course they should wait because that is our custom."

WILLIAM R. SCHORMAN
Belmond, Iowa

On "Communion"

The articles by Chalmers Coe on the Communion service were excellent, nor would I have my general appreciation overshadowed by the fact that what follows is largely in disagreement therewith.

Early in his remarks in the second article he says, "So far most intelligent Christians—who are abreast of current scholarship in the field of worship—are in agreement." What they are agreed on is that "the structure of worship ought to be such that, even when the Sacrament is not observed, the same order is there; when Communion Sunday comes, therefore, the Lord's Supper assumes a kind of inevitable and climactic place." I may reveal that I am both unintelligent and uninformed to confess it, but though I have heard this argued before, I am not in agreement therewith. Communion

(*Continued on page 32*)

Department Editor: RICHARD P. CARTER, 211 High Street, Suffield, Connecticut

AFTER TEN YEARS

by WILLIAM A. LEATH

An informal review of the work of the Commission on the Ministry

THE COMMISSION ON THE MINISTRY has completed its first decade of service to the ministers, churches, associations, and conferences of our fellowship. In view of this fact, and believing that it would be instructive to take a look at some of the highlights of these years, the Commission at its fall meeting in Cleveland, October 29 and 30, asked its new chairman to make an informal report in THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY. This report will be divided into two sections, the first of which follows. The second will appear in the next issue of the QUARTERLY, and will constitute the actual record of progress. This first section seeks simply to indicate the reasons why a national Commission on the Ministry was established.

The formation of a national commission, whose chief business it would be to concern itself with the ministry of our churches, grew out of a long felt sense of need, and like a good many important ideas affecting the national welfare of our churches, was implemented in the fertile brain of Dr. Fred Fagley, for many years the Associate Secretary of the General Council. Dr. Fagley, who had long noted the need, believed that matters concerning the ministry were too numerous and too complex to be casually handled, or to be left to the sole care of associations and state conferences. A Department of the Ministry, headed by a full time secretary, and comprising ministers and laymen elected by the General Council, would provide, he felt, an effective instrument to meet needs that with the years were becoming increasingly acute. That such a department was finally established is due mainly to Dr. Fagley's efforts.

One of the chief concerns of those charged with the responsibility of guiding our churches into a larger awareness of their role in the twentieth century was the fact that so few of our new ministers were coming from the churches of our own denomination. Our churches, though producing a fine group of Christian laymen, were simply not raising up their own ministry. Other professions were attracting our best-qualified young people while the ministry attracted less and less. Our pulpits were often filled by ministers who had sprung from other denominational rootage. Why was it that our churches were not producing our own ministers? Why was it that they had to depend so largely upon other denominations to supply their preachers?

There are a variety of answers to these questions which we need not explore here. It was this situation, however, which had much to do with the eventual establishment of a Commission on the Ministry on the national level, for only a national commission, it was felt, could effectively address itself to the task of recruiting and training the best young people available for the ministry in our churches.

During this first decade, as we shall see later, this has been a matter of continuing concern to the Commission, and something has been accomplished toward guid-

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ing more of our best young people into the ministry and allied Christian service. Our denominational emphasis on recruiting during this biennium indicates the importance of this problem.

There were other reasons why such a department was regarded as a necessity. The loosely-knit character of our fellowship had imposed upon many of our ministers a sense of isolation or, as they often described it themselves, "lostness." As they grew older, and it became more difficult to win the attention of churches seeking ministers, this sense of "lostness" deepened. The result was that many sincere, capable men often remained in a church too long either for its good or their own, and the later years of their ministry which should have been a rich and satisfying period of their career became filled with a sense of frustration and failure. Again, it was felt that this problem was too large to be met solely by state superintendents or other local church officers already over-loaded with multiple responsibilities. And while no single commission could of itself provide a final answer to this recurring situation, it could at least address itself to facets of the problem which had been largely overlooked. This the Commission has undertaken to do.

Along with this may be noted other matters relating to the welfare of our ministers. There was the constant need for what we now awkwardly call "in-service training," or "refresher courses." Many of our churches are small churches in fairly remote sections of the country. Libraries, if any, in such areas too seldom have the resource books that a minister needs. Moreover, books and periodicals are not inexpensive and salaries are frequently too small to permit substantial expenditures for this purpose. How could this situation be met? Certainly it should be a major concern of a department of the ministry as well as of Conference superintendents and denominational executives who, busy about so many other vital matters, have only limited time and resources with which to confront such a need.

Another of the great needs which has become apparent in recent years has been that of adequate standards for the ministry, and the development of more suitable guides than we have had for licensure, ordination, and installation. While there has been no desire to build absolute uniformity of custom and practice, there is, nevertheless, an increasing need to see that careful attention is paid to these matters in every association and conference, so that there can be a steady growth in orderly and meaningful procedures. It was felt that a national department studying such matters could be of great benefit to the association and conference committees on the ministry, as well as to all our churches.

Related inevitably to the minister's sense of well-being and to the aforementioned problems is the matter of remuneration for his services. Ministers need no economist to advise them that while the cost of living has advanced appreciably in recent years, ministerial salaries have lagged considerably behind such advances. The matter of ministerial salaries has become increasingly a concern of the Commission on the Ministry. For one thing, it has been clear that many excellent young men have been deterred from accepting the ministry as a life work because salaries were too low for the adequate maintenance of a home and family. While there have been isolated efforts here and there to spark the conscience of church people regarding ministerial salaries, there seemed to be no single, logical repository for this concern. It has become increasingly apparent that a national department of the ministry could be of enormous help in this matter.

Related to the question of salaries, of course, is the matter of annuities and other forms of remuneration. It is only too painfully obvious that many churches need to be counselled regarding what is

required of ministers in terms of professional expense. Church dinners and other social affairs, travel to and from various meetings, professional journals and other reading matter, all these unless there is some specific provision for them impose serious drains on already frail budgets.

All this may appear to be beyond the concern and jurisdiction of a national department of the ministry. The details mentioned here may be, but the problem in the large is not. Anything which affects the life and career of the ministers in our churches and consequently the effectiveness of our churches is an appropriate concern of this department. While daily bread may be secondary to the spiritual diet of a minister, the well-being of the whole man obviously involves both.

The Commission on the Ministry was founded about the time World War II was ending. Most people did not realize then that a continuing ministry to the armed forces on a large scale would be necessary. When the boys came home and were mustered out of the services, some thought that there would be no great need for chaplains. Those who remained in the service could readily be cared for under existing arrangements. Time and circumstance have changed all this. We now realize that for a long time to come we shall have a large army, navy and air force. The call for chaplains will continue, and the need to give these chaplains the helping hand they personally and professionally require will also continue. Under whose care shall these chaplains be? Surely they should not be left to fend for themselves with little or no liaison with or help from their denomination. The result has been that we now have a minister to our chaplains, who visits them on their posts of duty, writes to them, and gives them the guidance and understanding they require in facing special problems. This minister to chaplains is on the staff of the Commission on the Ministry.

Much of what has been set forth was in Dr. Fagley's mind when he began to talk about a department of the ministry. Many things have been added in the course of ten years which he and those about him did not foresee. Under the spirited and resourceful leadership of Dr. Fred Buschmeyer, much has been accomplished, and the period ahead promises even better things. In the next issue of the QUARTERLY, we shall note the progress that has been made and confront still other matters which are of concern to the Commission.

News Item: MINISTERS' SALARIES

The Commission on the Ministry voted unanimously to recommend that Congregational-Christian Churches regard $4,000 as a minimum salary for full-time, fully trained ministers.

A CHARGE TO A YOUNG MINISTER

by FREDERIC GROETSEMA

My Brother, May God be in your head and in *your thinking:*
In your thinking about your task as a minister,
In your thinking about your preaching of the Word,
In your thinking about your flock, especially the lambs.

May God be in your eyes and in *your seeing:*
To see always the whole man . . . Good and evil, the divine spark . . .
To see both sides of every human problem . . .
To see the world, its needs, its joys, its sin, its promise,
its hope, and dreams . . .
To try to see . . . through the Eyes of God . . .

God be in your ears and in *your hearing:*
To know when to hear . . . and remember . . .
To know when to listen, and promptly forget, forever.
To have your ears tuned to the Infinite, yet always
fully aware of noise of the world,
the cry for help, the cry for counsel, for succor.

God be in your mouth and in *your speaking:*
To know it is no light thing to stand between the living and the
dead and declare the Word of Life.
To speak the plain truth when it needs to be spoken,
To keep silent when silence is the better part of wisdom,
To ever and always speak boldly the good word for Jesus Christ . . .

God be in your heart and in *your loving:*
To keep a shrine in your heart for your Lord . . .
To keep a portion of your love for your wife and family
(and love will make time for them)
To keep your heart full of compassion and concern for your
people, loving them as God would love them . . .
To never carry your heart on your sleeve . . .

God be in your hands and in *your working:*
To plant seed today, and leave the harvest to God,
To build in time for Eternity . . .

This be your task, your joy, your cross, your crown.

Delivered at the Ordination Service for the Reverend Mark Richard Jordan at Hebron, Maine. by the Reverend Frederic Groetsema of Newton Highlands, Mass.

COVENANTS OF CONGREGATIONALISM

Readers are invited to send in copies of their local church covenant to be printed in THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY. *Such a sharing can make a real contribution to our church life, reminding all of us of our abundant heritage, and possibly encouraging some of our churches to take more advantage of the rich possibilities that are native to and rooted in our tradition.*

Please send only covenants that are suitable for frequent congregational use, i.e. relatively short, phrased in poetic idiom and characterized by a timeless theological and literary merit.

THE SCROOBY COVENANT — 1606

The Church gathered at Gainsborough in 1602, and organized under covenant at Scrooby in 1606, was transplanted to Leyden, Holland, in 1609. In 1620 part of this Church came to America in "The Mayflower" and re-established itself at Plymouth, Massachusetts.

The Reverend Charles C. Forman, pastor of The First Church in Plymouth, has written, "As I understand the . . . . situation, both Bradford and Winslow gave summaries of the Covenant used among the Pilgrims. The 1676 Covenant, according to our church records, was said to be the Covenant adopted by Scrooby as it was remembered. It is this Covenant we now use.

"As ye Lord's free people, we joyne ourselves, by a covenant of the Lord, in ye fellowship of ye gospell, to walke in all his ways, made known or to be made known unto us, according to our best endeavours, whatsoever it shall cost us, the Lord assisting us."

(Scrooby Covenant as recorded by William Bradford; possibly a summary of the original Covenant.)

"We promise and covenant with God and one with another to receive whatsoever light or truth shall be made known to us from his written word."

(Covenant used among the Pilgrims, as recorded by Edward Winslow; possibly a summary of an earlier covenant.)

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and in obedience to His holy will and divine ordinances:

"We being by the most wise and good Providence of God brought together in this place—& desirous to unite ourselves into one congregation or church under the Lord Jesus Christ, our Head—that it may be in such sort as becometh all those whom he hath redeemed & sanctified to himself.—We do hereby solemnly and religiously (as in his most holy presence) avouch the

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We can improve our selection of processional hymns

THE PROCESSIONAL HYMN

by MARGARET WESTLAKE POWERS

IN RECENT YEARS there has been a rapid rise in the level of musical knowledge of the average church musician—in his taste and understanding of what constitutes suitable music for the worship service. The various elements that make up the church service, the worship of Almighty God, should not be less than the best possible, according to the high standards set by the great church musicians in our heritage.

Many ministers are now following the Christian year in the broad outline of their services. This is an aid in planning, especially in choosing hymns. Most ministers and churches prefer to follow a logical and integrated order of service: adoration, confession, penitance, assurance of pardon, instruction, dedication, etc. Thus the first hymn or the processional hymn will usually be one of praise and adoration.

General usage in the past has regarded the processional hymn as a "marching" hymn, thereby ruling out all hymns in other than the marching tempo (4/4 time). However, the march is identified with secular life and is not necessarily the ideal for a service of worship. The unmarched processional, in which the choir walks reverently, quietly, and slowly, can be just as orderly and smooth as the precisely-in-step marching gait, and much more fitting for worshippers who are entering the house of God with a humble spirit. Any hymn of adoration and praise is a suitable processional. It should, of necessity, not be played in a time or rhythm that will help the choir to walk more easily; the choir should adapt itself to whatever time or rhythm is correct for the hymn. The element of worship should be the primary consideration.

We have a wide range of good opening hymns to choose from, and we should not confine ourselves to a dozen or more familiar tunes. It is perhaps true that the worship service is not the proper place to introduce new hymns; that a congregation struggling with a new tune becomes self-conscious, thereby losing God-consciousness. But if we are to discard the pretty, sentimental tunes that have been so widely used in the past, we must provide some means for learning new hymns. Regular congregational hymn-sings would be the best way to accomplish this end, but, unfortunately, many people feel that they are too busy for this type of recreation. Therefore, it is in the worship service that we reach most of our congregation.

There are several ways to introduce an unfamiliar hymn, but however it is done, it should create the least break possible in the progress of the mood of worship. We suggest that the best place is at the time of the second hymn. The minister can then read the words of one or more stanzas of the hymn (which presumably will be in keeping with the theme of the sermon) and make a brief comment about the tune.

When a minister wishes to discard a sentimental tune such as "Martyn" (Jesus,

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Lover of My Soul) for "Aberystwyth," a Welsh melody which has all the elements of a fine hymn tune, he might mention why he has made this choice: that it has a powerful melody, fine harmony, and an inspiring climax, and expresses the words admirably—all this in contrast to the sing-song melody and monotonous harmony of "Martyn." In fact, such a tune as "Martyn" in no way fits or expresses the words of the hymn. The minister might mention that the minor mode, indigenous to Welsh music, is not expressive of sadness, but of strength; and this tune is further strengthened by the transition into the major key which develops the climax of the hymn. It should be played at a flowing tempo and in a mood of confidence.

We suggest that the tune "Sarum" (For All the Saints) be replaced by "Sine Nomine" which has great strength, a sweeping rhythm, a thrilling climax, and much more adequately expresses the words of the hymn. At first, this hymn may present rhythmic difficulties, but if the organist will make the melody separate and louder than the harmony, he can lead the congregation most effectively. This hymn should be sung at a moderately fast tempo and with a surging rhythm.

Every congregation should be familiar with the German Chorale tunes in the hymnal. They should be played at a tempo that suits the words, not slow or stiff, but with a good rhythm and no special observance of the PAUSE mark at the end of a phrase. The PAUSE mark is a carry-over from the days when congregations had no hymnals, thus making it necessary for the words to be "lined-out" sentence by sentence. To observe these marks with a long hold interferes with the rhythmic progress of the hymn and many times distorts the meaning of the words.

The best and most inclusive book of hymn stories and descriptions that I have found is THE STORY OF OUR HYMNS by Armin Haeussler, Eden Publishing House, St. Louis 3, Missouri. LYRIC RELIGION, by H. Augustine Smith, is another but somewhat incomplete source of material.

A new hymn may be introduced as a choir anthem or, in an informal service, by the choir singing the first stanza and the congregation joining on the second. After a new hymn has been introduced, it is well to repeat it the following week at a different place in the service and again in several weeks, thereby keeping it alive in the memory. The Church School and Youth Choirs are ideal groups for the teaching of new hymns. It may surprise you to find that they will like the better hymn tunes every time.

May we suggest, that since a hymn is both words and music, the minister should consult his music director in regard to the tune or, when there is a choice of text, he should choose the text with the best tune.

ALTHOUGH THERE is much to be gained by following the Christian Year in the choice of Processional hymns, many of our Free-Church hymnals do not have a very wide choice among appropriate seasonal hymns. The following hymns are suggested as Processional hymns for the Advent - Christmastide - Epiphany Season (using the Shepherd theme for Christmastide, and the Star and Wise Men theme for Epiphany)—however, the text of some of our hymns includes both. The choice of hymns has been limited to The Pilgrim Hymnal, the one most widely used among Congregational Churches.

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ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS PROCESSIONAL HYMNS

1st Sunday in Advent	"Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones"
2nd Sunday in Advent	"Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus"
3rd Sunday in Advent	"Hail to the Lord's Anointed"
4th Sunday in Advent	"Angels, from the Realms of Glory"
Christmas Eve	"Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"
Christmas Day	"O Come, All Ye Faithful"
Sundays after Christmas	"Joy to the World! the Lord is Come"
	"The First Noel, the Angels Did Say"
	"Come, My Heart, Canst Thou Not Hear It"
	"Bright and Joyful is the Morn"
Epiphany and Sundays after Epiphany	"Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning"
	"As with Gladness Men of Old"
	"Bright and Joyful is the Morn"

INSTALLATION PRAYER

by JOHN ELMO WALLACE

ALMIGHTY GOD, who art from everlasting to everlasting and for whom the generations of old sought not in vain; Bless these moments with Thy presence, and our life striving for a renewed devotion in Christ's name. All praise be to Thee for the unquenchable light of faith that leads us on from darkness to the bright glory of Thy ways. To thee be praise for Thy gift of a singing hope that lives unafraid and undaunted in our hearts. To Thee be praise for the community of mind and spirit that unites us here. All praise be to Thee for the inestimable gift of Christ, by whose living spirit we are brought to this hour. To Thee be praise of that unseen company of stalwart pilgrims of the way, who encircle and encourage us.

Even now let Thy richest blessing rest upon this church as it adventures forth in a new relationship. May this people in love uphold and strengthen their minister. May this people courageously challenge him to build new dimensions in their lives. May they joyously serve, diligently seek, and honestly discipline themselves for the privileged calling of discipleship in Christ's name. In our midst lift the aspiring soul of this church as a spire against the darkened sky of our day and let it be as a beaconing promise of hope achieved.

Upon him who shares his life with the lives of many, grant the presence of Thy companioning love. Grant him the strength and purpose to be sincere and diligent, that intellectual discipline and spiritual exercise shall find him growing in heart and mind. May he know humility for this privileged position to which he now comes. May always the integrity of his faith be seen in acceptable deeds worthy of Thy blessing. Let always the glory of Thy vision be before him, the power of Thy truth and righteousness his strength. God, grant to him the graciousness of a great and grateful heart.

Bound together in love and concern, God grant Thy sustaining blessing upon this people and this minister, and upon his home and loved ones, that together they may venture forth freely and creatively in faith, and with community of mind and heart, in the service of Christ our Lord. Amen.

Delivered at the Installation Service for the Reverend Richard Earl Harris at East Windsor, Connecticut by the Reverend John Elmo Wallace of Wellesley Hills, Mass.

PREPARING TO PRAY IN PUBLIC

by ELMER S. FREEMAN

IN HIS EXCELLENT BOOK "The Public Worship of God," Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin quotes as an ideal set of directions for public prayer the "Directory for the Worship of God," adopted in 1788 by the Presbyterian Church. It reads as follows:

"We think it necessary to observe, that although we do not approve, as is well known, of confining ministers to set or fixed forms of prayer for public worship; yet it is the indispensable duty of every minister, previously to his entering on his office, to prepare and qualify himself for this part of his duty, as well as for preaching. He ought, by a thorough acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, by reading the best writers on the subject, by meditation, and by a life of communion with God in secret, to endeavor to acquire both the spirit and the gift of prayer. Not only so, but when he is to enter on particular acts of worship, he should endeavor to compose his spirit, and to digest his thoughts for prayer, that it may be performed with dignity and propriety, as well as to the profit of those who join in it; and that he may not disgrace that important service by mean, irregular, or extravagant effusions."

Prayer in a service of public worship occupies in the minds of the people a position of rather minimal importance. It might almost be considered the "orphan" part of the service. We expect the minister to spend a major proportion of his time in preparing to preach, and the sermon to occupy a major portion of the service.

If we can afford it, we employ experts to embellish and beautify our worship with music; in any case we expect someone to devote a good deal of time and effort to providing it. We expend great care and sometimes large sums of money upon edifices which we call "houses of prayer"—and then do almost everything in them with more care and attention than we pray.

Prayer ought to be central to public worship. Prayer is a more concentrated exercise than preaching, and not as much actual clock time need be used to make an impression of equal depth upon the worshipper. But where now our services of worship in Protestant Churches are so arranged as to enhance the importance of the sermon, they might better be at least as often so arranged as to enhance the importance of prayer.

As a matter of fact, people in our churches have not been trained to look for any great spiritual help or uplift of heart from prayer in public worship. A great Presbyterian minister once said to me: "Presbyterians don't worship; they merely pray and sing to pass the time until the sermon." And surely Presbyterians are no greater sinners in this respect than the rest of us. Very frankly, the reason public prayer means so little to our Protestant people is that so little meaning is put into it by the way prayer is offered in most of our churches. The average minister has simply not prepared himself to offer prayer with anything like the care he has used in preparing himself

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to preach. For thirty minutes of preaching, the conscientious pastor will spend hours of preparation. A minister who for five minutes of prayer spends an hour in preparation, is a minister to whom the remarks here made do not apply and one whose people, whether they tell him so or not, will find in the prayers he offers deep and true refreshment of spirit.

Preparation for Prayer

Perhaps we ought first to consider whether there should be any preparation at all for public prayer. There are those who would say there should not be. It would seem to them almost an impertinence to *prepare* to pray in public.

This may be so when the man who prays is (1) a genius at expressing true and significant religious thought in beautiful and appealing devotional language, or (2) an ordinary person who at the moment is in the grip of a strong emotion. But most of us, common or garden variety of parish parsons, are not geniuses.

I suspect, too, even of the so-called genius in prayer, that his public prayers are not so completely extemporaneous as may appear. He may not have written it in advance or even made notes for it, as he would for a sermon. But he has in his own mind, as Dr. George Buttrick suggests, "set bounds" for it. Later the prayer may "break the bounds to take heaven by storm" (again Dr. Buttrick's fine phrase) but only because first the man has literally steeped himself in the language and atmosphere of prayer as a whole, and then has apprehended the spiritual nuances inherent in the particular occasion on which it is to be offered.

It is perfectly possible, too, for even the most mediocre of us to be carried out of ourselves, as it were, at extraordinary moments, and led to offer inspiring and memorable prayer.

But for the most of us, such occasions are rare. Since we have to offer prayer Sunday after Sunday without benefit either of genius or extraordinary inspiration, we had better make up our minds to prepare, in one way or another, the prayer in which we lead our congregations.

How shall this preparation be made? There is, first, what may be called "background" or "long range" preparation. We ought to be familiar to the point of saturation with the classic literature of prayer. It is available in the official service books of the churches: the Book of Common Prayer of the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Lutheran service books, even the Roman Catholic Breviary (though we Protestants would not find so much of value in the Missal) and, in more modern vein, the new (1945) Book of Worship of the Methodist Church, among others.

Other sources of inspiration for prayers are to be found in literally innumerable collections of prayers in book form. Some are of single authorship; among the best are:

Devotional Services (Hunter)
The Climb to God (Quayle)
Diary of Private Prayers (Baillie)
The Altar Stairs (Newton)
Dr. Johnson's Prayers (Trueblood, ed.)
The Temple (Orchard)
Prayers of Social Awakening (Rauschenbusch)

Other volumes are compilations of prayers from many authors and sources. Within them one may well search out prayers by Fenelon, Bishop Lancelot Andrewes, Hugh Cameron, Christina Rossetti, Morgan Phelps Noyes, John Hunter, Henry Ward Beecher, and many others. Probably the best book of this genre is Noyes'.

Prayers for Services

If we are to make any written preparation at all for public prayer, we had better devote some time and care to the selection of language. There is no excuse

for the complicated sentence structure and the more than occasional ungrammatical English which sometimes we hear in public prayer.

A vocabulary which is appropriate to conversation, to secular public address, even to preaching, is not necessarily appropriate to prayer. One cringes at hearing long words or technical terms ending in "ism" or "ology"—"internationalism" or "ideology," to take two random examples.

Dr. Buttrick offers some wise counsel here:*

"God may be pleased with a clumsy prayer, but not when the clumsiness comes of sloth or a casual mind. The wording should not be "modern," despite the glib plea of the modern mind. Assuredly it should not be scientific or psychological. Every endeavor has a right to its own idiom, providing the idiom is not a prison which the initiate cannot escape and the stranger cannot unlock. Religion is entitled to its own vocabulary—on the same terms. The idiom should be modern only in the sense that it does not rehearse ancient theological strife or outmoded ideas, or use coinage whose image and superscription is worn smooth. Otherwise prayer language should not be ancient or modern, but movingly human and plainly reverent—the language of a devotional poem."

As for immediate preparation: Some will want to write their prayers in full. The procedure has advantages. One knows exactly how long he is going to pray (or preach). He is not tempted to go off on impromptu excursions of thought which may be irrelevant, incompetent, and immaterial. He can revise and polish words and phrases. He puts in what he wants to put in, and leaves out what he wants to leave out.

At the same time, as someone has said, "paper is a non-conductor." It may interrupt the currents of the spirit that connect minister and congregation. It is difficult to *pray* a written prayer without having the people know it is written. But it can be done.

On the other hand, the virtues of complete spontaneity in prayer are likely to be greatly exaggerated. Its theory is better than its usual practice. Actually, the so-called spontaneity which is only a camouflage for lack of preparation usually leads to aimlessness of thought and "vain repetition" of words.

Perhaps a compromise method is best —carefully to plan a public prayer, its scope and substance; then to outline it in notes as one would do for a sermon. One may put down key words, phrases, and even sentences; then fill in around them as he is moved to do when the prayer is offered. Some extemporaneousness may be sacrificed on the one side and some polish on the other, but the whole result will probably be most helpful to those whose thoughts the minister is attempting to lead toward the throne of God.

Every person who offers public prayer in his own words must, of course, be natural. Nothing detracts more from a service of worship than a stilted, artificial, affected manner of praying, or the use of what the minister's small son called his father's "heavenly-Father voice." To be natural means to use language and sentence structure which come easily to the individual, but it does not mean that the minister must content himself with his original equipment in these respects. It is no violation of naturalness to improve one's abilities by following some simple rather well-known rules.

Dr. Albert W. Palmer, in his "Art of Conducting Public Worship" suggests four such rules:*

1. Accent the verbs.
2. Keep the sentence structure relatively simple.

*_Prayer_ by George A. Buttrick, Abingdon-Cokesbury Press.

*_The Art of Conducting Public Worship_, by Albert W. Palmer, The Macmillan Company, New York, 1946. pp. 123-4

3. Use direct address to God. (Prayer is always addressed to God, not to the people.)
4. Remember that prayer is akin to poetry.
5. *Be affirmative and positive,* not negative.

Without preparation, then, our public prayers are likely to be lacking in a number of qualities essential to devotions of high quality, and full of other qualities they might better not have.

Preparation for prayer in public leads to a greater measure of *coherence.* Our thoughts are likely to be more logically arranged than if we depend exclusively upon the impulses of the moment. Preparation will probably provide a more *clear and lucid diction,* a richer choice of words. It will probably lead us toward greater *simplicity and correctness* of structure and of syntax. And, perhaps as important as any of these, the preparation of public prayers is likely to assure definite *limitations of time and topic.*

Prayers which are prepared need not become mechanical or lifeless. No one would maintain that to prepare an address or a sermon is to rob it of the requisite spontaneity and "living" quality. There is no more reason that it should happen to a prayer. If a minister is the kind of minister whose presentation of a sermon is mechanical, then his prayers will probably also partake of that quality. If, on the other hand, the parson has the root of the matter in him, a judicious, sincere preparation for the great and sacred duty of leading his people in prayer will lend, paradoxically, both weight and wings to his words,—the weight of significance and the wings of inspiration.

Some Faults

We of the "free churches" are likely to be unduly critical of the Christians who in worship "read prayers out of a book." But when our own ministers offer public prayer, these prayers will usually be found to have little if any more variety than those of the liturgical churches, and very much less beauty and felicity of expression.

It might be supposed that "extempore" prayer would give opportunity for more variety in its content than liturgical prayer, which is "appointed to be read" at certain times and seasons. Yet the fact is there is actually less variety in the topics touched upon in the public prayers of the typical Congregational or Methodist minister than there would be in those taken from, let us say, a Lutheran service book.

It is commonly held, against "prayers out of a book," that the language is rigid and inflexible whereas, when the minister prays "out of his own heart" he will use his own words. Indeed he will! One who goes about a good deal among the churches, often doing the preaching himself but hearing other ministers pray, can give eloquent testimony to the stilted, unimaginative, cliche-ridden prayers of the usual service of worship. It is sad but true that most of us ministers develop our own peculiar rigidities and inflexibilities of language.

If in a liturgical service we hear the same words of prayer repeated Sunday by Sunday, at least the language is usually felicitous. When we go overboard for "free" prayer, let us beware that we do not end with as little flexibility, and very much less felicity.

Almost parenthetically, I observe that ministers ought to learn some new names for God. Islam, it is said, has 99 names for the Deity; many Christian ministers apparently know only one—"our Father." This is indeed a noble appellation, coming as it does from Jesus himself, with all the wealth of new meaning he gave it. But there are others of at least approximately equal merit.

O Most Loving Father . . .

Eternal, Gracious Spirit . . .

O Thou Great Companion . . .

Almighty and Most Gracious Father . . .

Almighty God . . .

O God of Love . . .

Redeemer of our Souls . . .

Infinite and Eternal Lord . . .

Surely there is no reasonable excuse for the reiteration in our public prayers of this or any other one Name of God to the exclusion of others equally impressive and reverently beautiful.

Other specific shortcomings are numerous in much of our public prayer. Much of it is too declarative or indicative in mood. We offer God information—about ourselves, the state of the church, the affairs of the community. "Thou knowest, O Lord . . ." is a phrase much too often heard in our public prayers. We call the attention of the Almighty to current events concerning which we may surely, in all reverence, assume that He knows at least as much as we do.

Not every declarative or informatory sentence, to be sure, needs to be deleted from our prayer in public. But they should be few and brief, and each one must be closely related to the more specific purposes and objectives of prayer by phrases or clauses more appropriate to the praying vocabulary and feeling.

In a prayer for the Church one may say, perhaps: "Thou didst establish it as a place for worship, fellowship, and service." Then, after this one declarative sentence, one relates it to the petitionary mood by saying in the next sentence something like this: "Revive, restore, and sustain, we pray, all whose hands are put to its tasks, that they turn not back, nor faint from weariness in well-doing." The declarative mood has been changed to the imperative of prayer.

We use our prayers, again, as vehicles for preaching a supplementary sermon. One may assume, I hope, that praying in public, like preaching the Word of God, is based upon a sound understanding of theological truth. But the season of prayer is not the time to offer the people direct theological instruction.

If the occasion calls for an explanation of the doctrine of the Trinity, for example, the place for it, in worship, is in the sermon, not in the prayer. The teaching content of prayer ought to be like indirect lighting—one sees the light but not the naked bulb from which it comes.

In such "homiletic prayers," the alteration of a few words is often sufficient to change an inappropriate sermonette on doctrine into a prayer for enlightenment about it.

For example: "Thy plan of salvation, O God, brings us before the judgment of the Cross, whereon Thy Son Jesus atoned by the shedding of his own blood for the sin of Adam . . ."

This may or may not be good theology, but it is bad prayer. In the first place, it is declarative. In the second, it is loaded with theological presuppositions which, valid or not, decrease its value as prayer. Many worshippers, hearing it, and questioning in their own minds its truth as theology would find its value as prayer destroyed. Yet the central thought is sound; we do need to be brought before the judgment of the Cross.

Therefore why not say that, and nothing more—and say it as a petition, not a declaration? It might read this way: "Show us Thy purpose and plan, O God, and judge us, we beseech Thee, by the judgment of the Cross of Thy Son Jesus Christ." Its value as prayer is preserved; its controversial nature as theology is simply not raised.

The Content of Public Prayer

What should be the content of our public prayers? There are at least seven elements. The first is *communion, adoration.* This prayer asks nothing of God except the ineffable privilege of approach-

ing Him and being with him in prayer. In such a prayer we simply fling wide the gates of the soul and bid His Presence welcome.

The second is *praise,* in which in spirit we join with the angelic hosts about the Great Throne, singing "Holy, Holy, Holy."

Praise leads inevitably into *thanksgiving.* We offer God thanks for "all (His) goodness and loving-kindness to us, and to all men."

Confession is an indispensable attribute of public as well as private prayer. It was a sound instinct which led the creators of the great liturgies to begin worship with a penitential introduction by which the soul is given opportunity to cleanse and purge itself by confession of guilt before the worshipper presumes to open his lips in praise.

No list of the elements of prayer is complete without *intercession.* We do not pray for ourselves alone; we pray for those who worship with us, for persons dear to us, for the fellowship of the universal Church, and for a dozen or a score of other individuals and groups who need Christian prayer. We even pray, as Christ taught us, for our enemies.

Petition, even for material things, has its place in prayer. In the Lord's Prayer itself we are told to ask for daily bread. The place is a minor one, to be sure; we remember our Lord's command to seek first the Kingdom, and all life's material necessities will be added. Perhaps most of all at this point is required the caution applicable to all prayer—that it needs always to be qualified in Jesus' spirit; "Nevertheless, not my will but Thine be done."

Prayer may well close with the thought of *dedication,* consecration of self to God's will and purpose for us, thus keeping open the line of communication between the revealed Christian Gospel as a body of faith and the application of it to the human situation.

Not every one of these elements of prayer needs to be present in every public prayer. Nor need they be used in a rigid order or sequence, except that in general, confession ought to be toward the beginning and petition toward the close. But the minister ought to be aware of all these constituent parts of prayer, and use them in balanced proportion in his leading of the worshipping congregation in public prayer.

COVENANTS—(*Continued from page* 7)

Lord Jehovah the only true God to be our God & doe promise & binde ourselves to walke in all wayes, according to the Rule or the gospel—& in all sincere conformity to His holy ordinances—& in mutual love to, and watchfulness over one another—depending wholy & only upon the Lord our God to enable us by his grace hereunto."

(*Covenant mentioned in the records of the First Church in Plymouth in 1676, and the one now used by that Church.*)

THE SALEM COVENANT — 1629

"We covenant with the Lord and one with another; and doe bynd ourselves in the presence of God, to walke together in all his waies, according as he is pleased to reveale himself unto us in his Blessed word of truth."

(*Covenant of The First Church in Salem, Massachusetts; probably the first church covenant written in America.*)

Dept. Editor:
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A CHAPEL TALK TO MINISTERS

by DAVID K. BARNWELL

HERE TOGETHER ON THESE three days we are thinking about the layman. Now at our vesper hour it may not be amiss, in this comradeship of our special calling, to wait upon God concerning ourselves, in the spirit of the Psalmist. If you will, permit me an underscoring of the pronouns: "Search *me,* O God, and know my heart; try *me* and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." I do not intend to preach on the text, but simply to use it with you for a brief, guided meditation together.

One hears, at occasional ministerial conferences, of the peculiar temptations of the clergy. But of course they are not at all peculiar, they are very common, as all sin is common to all men. There are, I believe, no exemptions. So there is no clergy fare to the Kingdom of God. It may be that we accustom ourselves to cut rates and courtesy discounts, and get the habit, and unthinkingly expect like favors from God. We are in His service, and therefore expect to draw on an expense account. We know, in general, that this is false, but we are apt to forget it in particular.

The holy exhortations are upon our lips so frequently that we may be lulled into a false security. Having so often uttered the divine counsels to the congregation, we become insensibly persuaded that we have ourselves fulfilled them. It is our own hearts that need to be searched, our thoughts that require to be tried, our wicked ways that need to be cleansed and rectified.

St. Paul was deeply aware of this. "Look to yourself lest you too be tempted." "Let him who imagines that he is standing beware lest he fall." We do fall into those very traps against which we warn the layman.

Haste, busyness, preoccupation, for one. Having urged the rich, indispensable values of meditation and prayer, we trip on our own cluttered, hurrying, too busy parish duties, and find little time for quiet, for prayer, for the meditation we have urged on others. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew . . ." We parsons don't do much waiting, we are too busy; and there is much self-deception in busyness!

These beloved academic walls have resounded with warning against the sin whence most other sins arise, pride; and we have echoed it in many a church. And then pride comes to us with subtle insinuations: the subtle flattery of personal counseling, helping others to find maturity, balance, integration. We come so easily to accept our own stability and emotional health as guaranteed. Or it is possible to be so enamored of the impressiveness and importance of our preaching that we forget that we are called to be servants

(*Continued on page 21*)

The author, Minister of the Baptist Church of Summit, New Jersey, presented this talk to a Ministers' Conference at Union Theological Seminary.

QUESTION-MARKS IN THE BIBLE

by **Robert L. Eddy**
Minister, United Congregational Church, Little Compton, R. I.

A short time ago I made what I feel was a very substantial find, like stumbling in the attic on an old shoe-box full of bank notes of my late father. I hasten to try to share all this with the rest of the family.

It all started with my reading Mary Ellen Chase's new book, "Life and Language in the Old Testament," a charming continuation of her thoughts about the Bible as literature alone, which she so well began in "The Bible and the Common Reader." The present study of the Bible apart from its religious interest was perhaps begun, certainly advanced, by John Livingston Lowes's "The Noblest Monument of English Prose." The zeal with which literature scholars now turn to the Bible and cannot leave it until they have shown how the religion of the great literature of the Bible has contributed to the greatness of the literature comes with a welcome effect on us preachers who have been proclaiming the same thing for years, and we smilingly turn to these new zealots, saying, "Is Saul among the prophets?"

This question is one type of utterance which Professor Chase looks at with interest in her new book. The questions of the Old Testament she finds often very provocative. They call for answers from the reader himself. ("Is there any sorrow like unto my sorrow?") They show what Professor Chase develops as a main theme in her fine book: the Hebrew Bible's power of association and identity of ideas and words through its modes of expression.

I leave the rest of what Professor Chase has to say about the questions of the Old Testament for you to read for yourself, if you have not already. The literary style of this book, like that of the book under her study, is extraordinary in its limpid simplicity and clarity,—a style sorely needed in treating the weighty themes of religion. I bring the larger consideration of the questions asked in the New Testament, which, subjoined to Professor Chase's paragraphs, suggests at least the subject under the above title.

I have long contended that in preaching the questions are more important than the answers. If we can find out what makes them questions, asking first if they really are questions, and really *religious* questions, then we are going to have much less trouble with the answers. And no good answer can come from an unclear or irrelevant question. Also, the answers to the questions may vary among ages, preachers, and situations, but the questions, many of them, are eternal. ("If a man die, shall he live again?") Lastly, a sermon ending with a question might compel the parishioner to work out his own answer. ("Who say you was the neighbor . . . ?")

The question in the Bible is often a rhetorical device, but is more effective when it is genuine. Curved, like a hand reaching for a higher ladder-rung, it shows life and thought in motion, and generates living thought in the hearer. ("What shall I do to inherit eternal life?") Let us be drawn into a new study of the New Testament, which might by now seem to have been exhausted, or at least our studying-powers of it might seem exhausted—and look about in the field for the shining little sickles on the pages which the reapers have left. It is not as hard as you might think to list the questions in the New Testament, and after you have done it, you will want to organize them more or less into categories, and thinking up names for these

categories is going to give you some new light on the whole subject. You will find, first, as Professor Chase did, the Hebrew style and temper of language. Questions among the Jews can be searching or very sarcastic, to hint at two colorings they give. Most important, in the matter of the New Testament questions, as in that of those of the Old, is the way in which we are drawn into the documents themselves as participators and not as spectators only. ("Man, who made me a judge and a divider among you?") Below is one way of looking at the provocative questions of the New Testament, and I offer it with enthusiasm for the subject and with diffidence for its present treatment in the hope it will inspire you to do better.

First, there are questions which simply seek information: What reasoned ye by the way? Where are the nine? These for some have shown the fully human, humanly incomplete Jesus, lacking in unnecessary divining powers and so having to ask questions. These questions are similar to the "pillar-passages" of Dr. Schmiedl, which, by their "human" quality, he inferred, could not have been made up, and thereby they guaranteed the genuineness of their context. (N.B.: non sequitur, but suggestive.)

There are rhetorical questions, which flaunt a truth in the eyes of the beholder: If they do this when the wood is green, what will happen when it is dry? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?

In a fashion supposedly indigenous to New England, Jesus can use a question as an answer to a question, and turn the tables with severity and without malice. To the question, "Why do your disciples trespass?" he answers: "Why do you trespass, in the matter of Corban, for instance?" To the question: "By what authority do you work?" comes the answer, "By what authority did John the Baptist work?" Or the answering question can be a diversion to another facet of the problem: "Is it lawful to give tribute?" is met with "Whose inscription is on the coin?" Or a diversion to another person present, in the same problem of taxation: "Is it lawful to pay the half-shekel?" followed by "What think you, Simon?" to one who was little qualified to think at all, apparently, as well his Master knew.

A major use of the question in the teachings of Jesus was as a starter of thoughts, for Jesus was anxious, as we know, to get people to think for themselves, and it came pretty hard to all of them. One group of questions looks like a set of thought-*starters*. Which is easier, to forgive, or to cure? What will the Lord do to the wicked husbandman? (This is *not* a "set-up" question; the Lord could do several things: forgive, forget, punish, avenge, judge,—to name a few.) Which was the neighbor to him that fell among thieves? Do you think the eighteen killed in Siloam were worse offenders than all the rest of the people in Jerusalem?

Then there are what I found to be thought-*shapers*. Here Jesus is seemingly thinking with his hearers: If you love those who love you, what reward have you? Shall not God avenge those who cry to him night and day?

LASTLY, IN THIS REALM, are thought-*clinchers*. Here Jesus has driven home his point, but he bends it over in the form of a questionmark, so that when the hearer leaves Jesus and the spell is broken before new temptations, the morale will not give in without a twinge from the newly empowered conscience, held together by this new truth: Are you not of more value than the birds? Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Will a man not pull his sheep out of the pit on Sunday? Will he not leave his ninety-nine sheep to find the lost one? Is not life more than food? Or the body more than raiment? What profit has a man for the loss of his own soul, or what shall he give in exchange for his soul? Which is

more valuable, the temple or the gold in the temple? The (material) things which are prepared for you, *whose shall they be?* (Italics mine, R.L.E.)

Perhaps less important is the class of questions which make their point through ridicule, a Jewish rhetorical talent to this day: What man of you if your son ask for a fish will give him a serpent? Can the blind lead the blind? Wherewith shall (unsalted) salt be salted? (A question with a real truth in it if you ask it to yourself enough times. Try it.) Or the ridicule may be an unveiled chastisement: Can Satan cast out Satan? Can you not tell the signs of the times? (Well, can you?) There is exasperation fully human in the question, "How long must I be with you, O you of little faith?"

So far we have listed questions Jesus asked. There is another whole field of questions he made other people ask which are also provocative to our understanding of him, our world, and ourselves. There are questions of the disciples,—the original twelve, and all others since: Why do you speak in parables? Are you the Christ, or do we seek another? (Sometimes some men do, but why?) Whence are we to have loaves for so many? Why could we not cast that demon out? How often shall I forgive my brother? Who shall be the greatest in Heaven? And this, the most dreadful of all: . . . . Lord, is it I?

THE QUESTIONS on Jesus' origins reflect his human side and milieu: What manner of man is this? Is this not the carpenter's son? Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?

There are questions asked Jesus directly, which have overtones permeating our own time: What have I to do with thee, thou Holy One of God? What shall I do to inherit eternal life? What shall I do to be saved? (Softly and silently:) What lack I yet?

What is the greatest commandment? Is divorce lawful? When did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not minister to thee?

Pertinent to our times and in the forefront of the field are Jesus' questions concerning himself and his powers over men: What have I to do with you? What will you have me do for you? Will you be made whole? Do you believe that I can do this? What did you go out in the wilderness to behold? (Salvation through science?) Why do you call me good? (Or, "Why do you question me concerning the good?") Who is my mother and brother? Who say you that I am? Are you able to drink from my cup? Would you (twelve) also go away? The woman to Peter: "Are you not one of them?" (Cf. this woman in A.J. Gossip's great sermon, "The Gallilean Accent": "We know you are one of his followers; your accent betrays you!") Simon, son of John, do you love me?

The questions in the Passion Story will lead a preacher through a whole series of Lents: Look at those of Judas: Why was the ointment wasted? How much will you give me? Is it I? The questions *to* Judas: Do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss? and: What is that to us?

How men in the Passion Story are etched in the acid of their questions! Annas: "Are you the Son of God?" Pilate: "Are you the King of the Jews? . . . Don't you know I have the power to free you? . . . What is truth? (He didn't stop for an answer.) What evil has he done? Will you have him or Barabbas?" The malefactors: "Are you not the King? Save us and yourself!" and "Have you no respect for God even now?" Jesus's last question: "Why hast Thou forsaken me?" Questions of the resurrection stories: Why seek ye the living among the dead? Woman, why do you weep?

Beyond the gospels, the questions are fewer and thinner, but some still stick out, as in *Acts:* "Why do you persecute me?" Paul's questions are largely rhetorical, but note these: If God can be for

us, who can be against us? . . . Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? . . . Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? . . . If the body were all for seeing where were the hearing? . . . O death, where is thy sting?

And in the Revelation are three questions of note: Who is worthy to open the book? Who are these who are arrayed in white robes? And this great question, embodying the new eschatology for an atomic age in a handful of simple words: What city is like the great city, for in one hour so great riches are made desolate?

This is the heart of the list of one hundred and thirty-six questions in the New Testament which one lowly parson listed. After looking them all over, and thinking too of the questions of the Old Testament, I listed what I considered the most vital questions. These turned out to be nine in number, and encompass the whole of man's reasoning life on earth, his quest for survival, for meaning, for love, in life, and in the hereafter. They are a way of summing up all we work for and with. Assuming the reader's interest to have endured up to this point, I submit them here:

Will God dwell on the earth? (Solomon's question at the dedication of the temple.)

What is man (that Thou art mindful of him)?

If a man die, will he live again?

What is truth?

What does the Lord require of you?

What shall I do to inherit eternal life?

What have I to do with Thee, O Christ?

"What will you have me do for you?"

Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?

As the heroes of old died without the promise, God having ordained that they without us should not be made perfect, so it is given us to strive to answer their questions, or at least to ask them again. But first, what were those questions, and what did they seek? Looking in your own Bible for your own list of great questions, how readest thou?

CHAPEL TALK—(*Continued from page 17*)

of God in a humble way. The pulpit is at least three steps above the level of the pews, and in this there is considerable danger for our souls! Again, the community calls upon us, and we rejoice in the opportunity of the Christian witness in community circles, the Mayor's Committee on Vice, the pep talk at the Community Chest dinner; but it is woefully easy to mistake community adulation for community service. Pride has its traps marvelously camouflaged!

Out in our communities and churches we are referred to as "leaders," leaders, to be sure, in fine enterprises. "Be not called leaders, for One is our leader." At least this must give us a perpetual disquietude for our souls' sake!

And finally, we speak often of love, and into our tasks, among our people, we carry solicitude in love. "Let love," said Paul, "let love be without dissimulation." No pretense, always genuine. Yet love becomes for us too glib on our lips, not real in our concern. Unless we watch most carefully, do we not find ourselves pretending to love, and with occasional unction speaking love, without really caring? This is the professionalism into which pretense leads us.

"Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."

WHAT CONSTITUTES A CALL

by Roy M. Pearson

An authentic call to the Christian ministry usually gains its full force in three principal stages.

First: An observation of need. The specific circumstance may be the loneliness of the bereaved. It may be the pains of the ill, the humiliation of the alcoholic, the despair of the aged, or the hunger and homelessness of colonial and refugee peoples. Somewhere among his fellows a man finds an emptiness and agony within the range of one of the churchly vocations—the parish ministry, the military or institutional chaplaincy, missionary service, administrative leadership, religious education.

Second: A sense of involvement. The needs of the world are not something wholly apart from himself, the man discovers. For reasons which he cannot explain he finds himself uncomfortable in the knowledge that they exist. By forces which he cannot control he feels himself impelled to oppose the evil, ease the pain, heal the wounds, and restore the long abandoned self-respect and hope. Suddenly he realizes that he has been robbed of his freedom. Something has so firmly entangled him in the world's impotence and anguish that unless the world achieves its destined joy and peace, his own are gone. His brother has been *his* keeper, but now there is something which beckons him to be his *brother's.*

Third: An awareness of capacity. The general becomes specific. The vast obscurity of need yields one area of sharper focus. The despairing dread of an undertaking too tremendous to be possible transforms itself into a deepening consciousness of personal relationship with a single, definable portion of the task which is not intractable. "These are things which I can understand," the man says to himself. "These are concepts which I can manage. These are burdens which I can carry. The peculiar contours of my being seem to fit into the world at this particular point, and here I feel at home."

Like every other genuine call, the summons to the ministry comes first of all from God, but the language of heaven is incomprehensible when not translated. So the Word is made flesh whenever God hovers near a man in hope that he will be His minister, and the call becomes incarnate in the world's sorrow and sin. The merciful shed their light upon it. Discerning pastors, thoughtful teachers, devoted parents, and loyal friends all point the way toward it.

And the warrant for a man's response is not the assertion of power—"I can do all things!" It is rather the confession of dependence—"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me!"

Dr. Pearson is dean of Andover Newton Theological School.

Dept. Editor: LAWRENCE L. DURGIN, Central Congregational Church, Providence 6, R.I.

It was some years ago that your editor first heard of this paper, delivered to the St. Louis Ministerium, and now he has a copy and has the permission to print it. We are publishing it in two installments. This issue carries the section on "Historical Affinities" and the first section of the "Theological Affinities and Foundations" concerning the Word of God. In the next issue we shall publish the second installment "Concerning the Church." The author, the Reverend Charles Harvey Arnold, is at present a candidate for the M.A. degree at the Chicago University Divinity School and is, at the same time, serving as assistant librarian at the Chicago Theological Seminary. For the past four years and at the time when he prepared this paper, he was serving as pastor of the Plymouth Church in Danville, Illinois.

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS IN THE COMING UNION

by CHARLES H. ARNOLD

I
HISTORICAL AFFINITIES

IN THIS ERA OF Western history we are being caught up in some tremendous events that a prophet might well call, "the mighty acts of God." Politically, the power struggle between East and West; ideologically, the conflict of antagonistic ways of life—(communism and democracy); socially, the era of the right of man to life in community; technologically, the unification of the world through nuclear physics; militarily, "The Century of Total War" (R. Aron).

Theologically, we are in the "post-Protestant[1]" era, or at least in the "post denominational," or "ecumenical," phase of Western Christendom. The ecumenical impulse is a reality, a serious attempt to recognize the deep unity in our dividedness as Churches. We are lured by the hope of a "coming Great Church." Indeed, if we are willing to receive it, it is nothing less than what we have always affirmed, when century after century, we have declared: "I believe in the holy Catholic Church." We shall speak more of this in the last section, but here it is said to set a mood for reflection.

In our mutual fellowships we are anticipating a new phase of this ecumenical upsurge; the coming union, which by the grace of God, we hope is accomplished in 1957. If it is not accomplished (and God forbid!) then something is radically wrong with us, and more especially, those of us on the Congregational side. The failure will not be, as far as we are concerned, in polity or theology, but in the spirit, i.e., failure to discern the mind of the Holy Spirit who unites all of the people of Christ.

The Lord of the Church, Jesus Christ, is calling for the Unity of His people, so long divided over non-essentials and marginal matters. I would not make indifferent anything that Christian people hold to be of decisive value, whether in terms of polity, theology or in ethics. But in the present perspective, the *only* thing that "matters" is the fundamental unity of God's people in the Church of Jesus Christ. If this sounds *dogmatic,* it is the dogmatism of *intensity* and *urgency* as I accept the final hope of the redemption of

all men in the Body of Christ. I look at all of this eschatologically, i.e., from the "end of history" that is "now." To me, this means that the Church (and Churches) does not have an infinity of "time" to be the *one* Church of God; it only has the "now" of the "end of history."

Certainly polity, theology and ethics are important as I hope to show, but only as seen in the present ecumenical epoch. Not one of us today can justify any particular thing (polity, doctrine or practice) that separated us originally from the Church Catholic, or from one another in the course of our Protestant development. Indeed, for most of us in mid-stream Protestantism, there is nothing that makes us "distinctive," or distinct from one another. Really, how could you distinguish a Presbyterian, a Methodist, a Congregationalist, a Baptist or Disciple (outside of their having been immersed), or a member of the Evangelical and Reformed Church? Basically, the only difference would be that we belonged to churches that do things in slightly different "ways." There is no precise theological difference.

Again, the reason for this is that we are in the ecumenical age and there are really no longer any "denominational" theologies as was true of the time of a hundred years ago. The older "liberal" theology abolished denominational theology, I believe, once and for all. And we will always be debtor to it if for seemingly nothing else.

Most of mid-stream Protestantism has a common history and a common theological heritage (though there are many variations and emphases). Therefore, there is no great reason why most of the Protestant denominations could not merge into a corporate union (as is being urged in the "Greenwich Plan").

I believe this to be eminently true of the proposed union before us. We have a common historical rootage and affinity. We belong to the same Protestant tradition—basically, the Reformed tradition of John Calvin, with elements of Zwinglianism. Certainly, the shadow of Martin Luther is always brooding over us[2]. Our heritage is the Reformation as modified by historical, theological and sometimes geographical factors.

I need not write a chapter here on Church History, for the facts of our history are well known to all of us, or should be. It will be interesting and needful to indicate a few things pointing to our historical affinities. We are often so imbedded in the present that we do forget our history, and like ancient Israel we really need a constant "rehearsal" of those events that brought us into being. Without this, we lose perspective, and our debates center about polity and property! We become fearful of losing our "freedom" and "congregational autonomy!"

I agree with Dr. Carl Schneider that in a church union, for all "practical purposes," we "surrender" our historical traditions. I don't think he implies that we have to *forget* our historical backgrounds[3]. Therefore, I only want to remind us of these backgrounds that the foreground may become more sharply focused. No one can accuse us then of glorying in ecclesiastical geneology or in being a kind of churchly D.A.R.! Let us look briefly at some historical affinities.

THE REFORMED TRADITION stems from the reforming work of Zwingli in Zurich and of Calvin in Geneva in the 1520's and 1530's and on until Calvin's death in 1564. The Swiss Reformation spread far beyond the confines of the cantons—to Germany, France, the Netherlands, even into Hungary and Transylvania. It spread into England through Martin Bucer and into Scotland through John Knox[4].

The Reformation was nearly aborted in England (for Henry VIII was not really in sympathy with Luther or the other Reformers.) In the 1550's when Mary came to the throne, the Reformers were put to the stake (as Crammer and Ridley), or

driven into Continental exile (they were called the "Marian Exiles"). These exiles went to Geneva and Strasburg and drank deeply of the spirit of the Calvinistic theocracy. After Mary's bloody reign, and with the accession of Elizabeth, the exiles returned, determined to set up the Church in England's "green and pleasant land." Out of this coterie came the Puritans, the "precise" men who entered into a struggle with the Queen seeking to purify the Church and have done with all Popish rites. From this ferment in this era of the latter part of the 16th century, came the Separatist-Congregationalists and the non-Separatist Congregationalists.

Though some of the Separatists had already gone to Holland seeking liberty of conscience, it was under the recalcitrant James I that the Congregationalists were driven to Holland to set up a congregation of God's people in Leyden and to migrate in 1620 to New England. These people, and the Puritans who came to Massachusetts Bay later were sturdy Calvinists and belonged to the Reformed tradition.

The Reformed Church in Germany, from which you spring, was a blending of the Lutheran and Calvinistic emphases especially in the Palatinate in the later 16th century. Blending may not be the word, for the Reformed Church in Germany developed an ethos of its own. Bucer, Zwingli and Melanchthon all contributed to this distinct consciousness of the Reformed Church in Germany. These men, especially Bucer and Melanchthon, had modified and even "humanized" (for they were all "humanists" in the classical sense) the Reformed tradition and the Lutheran tradition. Prof. Schneider sums this up by saying:

"The Reformed Church in Germany was not a Calvinistic importation but was the logical outgrowth of a liberal tendency native to the German movement.[5]" Dr. George Richards says that these Churches that were neither purely Calvinistic or Lutheran occupied *"an intermediate position* between strict Lutheranism and pure Calvinism." (Reformed Church Review XIII, 1909, p. 322). Their symbol was the Heidelberg Catechism of 1562-63. Strict Lutherans (now hardening into Protestant scholastics) persecuted and despised them. Indeed, the Heidelberg Catechism was a "union document" that bound these various elements in the Reformed Church against the ultra-Lutherans[6]. Curiously, it was more Lutheran—experiential in its devotional piety —than were the contemporary Lutherans! Someone has said that it has "Lutheran inwardness, Melanchthonian clearness, Zwinglian simplicity, and Calvinistic fire, harmoniously blended." (Max Gobel). So the ecumenical-unity impulse has been there from this early time.

It was relatively easy then, it seems, that with the coming of the Reformed Church to America that it should unite with the Evangelical Synod of North America in time. For the Evangelical Synod was the old "Kirchenverein des Westens" founded near St. Louis in 1840 by men coming from Germany out of identical backgrounds with the Reformed Church. This "Kirchenverein" grew out of the needs of the immigrant Germans who were treking westward to Missouri in the 1830's. Germans were pouring into the West in great numbers and they were in desperate need of churches and pastors. This was the raw frontier of America, this Missouri of 1840. Missionaries came westward to evangelize these people, missioners from Germany—Barmen, Bremen and Berlin, and from Basel in Switzerland. There was need that the Gospel be preached and Christ's people be gathered in churches. But how could this be done? This was the problem that confronted the ministers who formed the Church Union of the West: Edward Nollan, Joseph Rieger, Johann Riess, Phillip Heyer, Hermann Garlichs, Karl Daubert, George Wall. Their story is familiar to all of you. They came into existence as a pastoral conference, not as a synod. Their

struggles were many: indifference from some quarters, rationalism from another, and fears and doubts in between.

But here is a little known fact. In 1834, a secret society of Congregational ministers was founded in Hartford, Connecticut, whose avowed purpose was to combat Catholicism. In 1835, they sent Thomas Gallaudet on an exploratory trip to Missouri to look into this situation among the German immigrants, fearing that they might be falling for the propaganda of the Catholics. Negotiations were begun with the Basel Mission Institute and Joseph Rieger and Gwendelin Wall were sent West under subsidy from the Hartford society. The Congregationalists of Connecticut, then in a Plan of Union with the Presbyterians, were evangelizing in Illinois and the farther frontier.

The "Society for the Promotion of Collegiate and Theological Education in the West" supported the seminary at Marthasville, Missouri, for the training of Evangelical ministers (this Society was founded by Theron Baldwin of the "Illinois Band" from Yale who founded Illinois College at Jacksonville in 1829). In that era Congregationalists and Evangelicals were mutual supporters in the work on the frontier; they exchanged delegates in meetings and in the founding of churches.

All of this, and more, is indicative of the feeling for Christian fellowship and unity when Christian men face a common task surrounded by hostile forces as were present on the frontier in those days.

In 1934, the Evangelical Synod of North America—the original Kirchenverein—and the Reformed Church in the United States came together in an organic union, which was fully consummated in 1940. Twenty years have proved that the impulse that brought you together was inspired.

Three years previously, the Congregationalists and the Christian Churches merged.

Today then, two denominational bodies are seeking a corporate union. This would mean that six original bodies would become a United Church in America, a vital part of the ecumenical Church. Dr. George W. Richards, speaking of the merger of your two original bodies, called it a "union of heart and mind." This is actually the valid criterion for any union on any level. Are the Congregational Christians and the Evangelical and Reformed of one heart and mind? Historically, we are; are we *theologically?* I do not mean this in a narrowly conceived way, certainly not denominationally. Within our fellowships, I am sure that there are theological variations, and for real growth, there must be. Specifically, I am speaking of *foundations,* the great affirmations of the Christian faith that make us distinctively *Christian* rather than Buddhists or Zoroastrians. I am thinking of our understanding of God and His redemptive purpose in Christ and His Church; of the Holy Spirit, of Sacraments, and of polity only as it relates to the "bene esse" of the Church's common life. I am thinking of the proclamation of the Word of God Who is Jesus Christ; of the witness of the Church. I am thinking of the final Hope that we have in Christ. These things are before us and we must face them in the time ahead of us.

II

THEOLOGICAL AFFINITIES AND FOUNDATIONS

My use of the term "theological foundations" in this discussion means simply our *understanding* of the Christian Faith as the Gospel of Jesus Christ. No attempt will be made to explore in detail all of the doctrinal questions that might possibly arise in time. Our concern will be with *fundamentals* at this point. Let me say also that I am not concerned that we agree in terms even of exact verbal formulations; rather, that we be agreed in the spirit on the theological foundations.

On both sides, we are already agreed

that there may be flexibility in our interpretations of the Christian Faith, though I do not understand this to mean laxity on basic doctrines. In your *Constitution and By-Laws,* you make it clear in Part I:3 that "doctrinal standards" may "differ," and when this is true you have the privilege and freedom to adhere to one of the confessions that your fellowship accepts—the Heidelberg Catechism, the Augsburg Confession, or Luther's Catechism. There is no attempt, as I see it, to enforce theological conformity; you are still in "heart and conscience free." Some of our brethren do not see this. They want such doctrinal latitude that it could well be said of us, as it often is, "we don't have to believe anything." I do not mean to be uncharitable in saying this, but it is all too true of us in some quarters.

Your doctrinal and symbolic statements, as is true of all such, have one real purpose, and that is: "for the maintenance of truth and order in the proclamation of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and the advancement of the Kingdom of God in accordance with the Word of God." (*Constitution-By-Laws Preamble*).

We are agreed that a creed or doctrinal statement is a "testimony" of faith instead of a "test" of faith. But the reality to which the creed bears witness is the very truth that we are trying to understand: that God was in Christ to fulfill His redemptive purpose for the world. (II Cor. 5:16-21). Therefore, a creed (or creeds) can be, and is, a mighty witness of this truth and may lead us into a deeper understanding of the most essential things of our holy faith.

Concerning our present, pending union, I think that it is urgent that we draw closer together for profounder study and understanding of our common tradition; indeed, that we take *seriously* the entire theological enterprise as our personal obligation.[7] Today may be the "first fruits" of this hope.

Your General Synod of June 1953, meeting in Tiffin, Ohio, makes this very clear. In part, the *Acts and Proceedings* read concerning "Church Union":

"What is clearly evident, however, is the fact that the Evangelical and Reformed Church cannot, in good conscience, consider any union, whether it be the one now under consideration, or any other, excepting on the basis of a mutual recognition of one another's faith, polity and tradition. It is immaterial whether these heritages are documented in a written instrument or represent merely the historical development of the life of the Churches. If this statement is correct, it follows that our own Church is bound to respect the tradition of our sister denominations as conscientiously as we expect this same consideration from others. We have singled out tradition, because we are convinced that this is the area in which the greatest obstacle in the effecting of a union of Evangelical Churches lies."

Yes, there must be "mutual recognition" and "respect," and more: a sincere *exploration* and *penetration* of the whole historical and theological tradition that we have in common. Tradition is not the "dead hand of the past," to use a cliche, but the "vital center" of the truth that has been entrusted to the Christian fellowship from the beginning. This tradition is the "evangelical succession" based on the Incarnation of the Word of God and its proclamation through the centuries.

In the following discussion, then, I shall explore with you the theological foundations that will undergird our union in Christ and His Church.

A. *Concerning the Word of God:*

When we speak of the "Word of God," we speak of no abstract wisdom pervading the universe, nor of a Book infallibly inspired. We speak of the Word of God incarnate, embodied in a real,

historical person—Jesus Christ. The Bible is the deposit of written witness to the event of Jesus Christ. And this witness is in human, fallible words. Jesus Christ is the One sent from God; the Truth of God; the disclosure of God in a Person. It was He who was "in the beginning with God" and "was God" (St. John 1:1-18; Hebrews 1:1-4; 11:1-4 et al.). It was He who "emptied" Himself (Phil. 2:5-11) and came on our common ground and bore the Cross on our behalf and was raised up as "Christus Victor" in the "mighty act" of the Resurrection.

The Apostolic Church proclaimed this mighty deed as the very revelation of God's grace and love. This was the "kerygma," the "preaching of Jesus Christ" (Romans 10) as Lord and Savior.

Written tradition (Gospels, sermons, epistles, tracts, et al.) was the proclamation of Jesus Christ as the Word of God. The apostolic men heralded that God had come among us to save us. Baptism bore witness to this; the Lord's Supper set forth the same in corporate worship. Indeed, the whole life of the Church lies in this constitutive power of the Word of God.

ACTUALLY, AT THIS PRESENT moment, we are recovering this paramount reality of ism, in the liberal era, had almost lost the proclamation of the Word. Protestant-this truth. Those who held it most nearly hardened it into a rigid, Biblical fundamentalism that equated the Bible as Book with the Word of God. Since the first World War, and more especially in the last twenty years, we have been witnessing a revival of "Biblical theology." To describe this significant movement would take a chapter by itself. I believe that in it we are witnessing a revitalizing of our faith and vocation as ministers. To me, it is the token that the Holy Spirit is yet among us once again showing us the things of Christ. See what is happening: a new translation of the Bible—the *Revised Standard Version;* the *Interpreter's Bible,* the first major commentary since the mid-nineties, written in English (*International Critical Commentary*); the plethora of works on Biblical theology (the works of C. H. Dodd, Alan Richardson, Norman Snaith, H. H. Rowley, A. G. Hebert, John Marsh and the late Wheeler Robinson of England; R. Bultmann, O. Cullmann, E. Stauffer, W. Eichrodt, G. von Rad on the Continent; B. W. Anderson, Paul Minear, Floyd Filson, Earnest Wright and the late Clarence Craig in America); a series of monographs, "Studies in Biblical Theology" is being published conjointly in England and America. All of this is indicative of what is taking place in the area of Biblical studies. Even the systematic theologies of Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Gustav Aulen claim to be Biblical theologies more than apologetics or philosophical theology.

Likewise, in preaching, there is this same upsurge. Fundamental questions as to the "raison d'etre" of preaching and the whole ministerial vocation are being asked. Books dealing with the "why" of preaching are coming forth, e.g., James Stewart's *A Faith to Proclaim* (1953); the solid works of W. E. Sangster; Herbert Farmer's *Servant of the Word,* and your own Frederick Schroeder's recent *Preaching The Word With Authority* (1954). Canon Theodore Wedel is delivering a lecture series on "The Pulpit Rediscovers Theology" at Andover Newton Seminary. Journals such as *Interpretation, Theology Today,* and the *Scottish* Journal of Theology all grew out of this Biblical renaissance.

It is commonplace to say that Barth and Brunner and the Niebuhrs are greatly responsible for this. These men were early prophets crying in the wilderness telling us of "the strange new world in the Bible."[8] We might not have received these men with their dogmatics and "nature and destiny of man" at the front door, but they have come in the back door to the pulpit and few have not felt their prophetic spirit and mood.

I believe that *here* is the foundation of foundations: God has revealed Himself in Jesus Christ as His Word of Truth; that the task of the Church is to proclaim Him as the Saving Word to this generation and every generation—"unto the ends of the Earth and to the end of time."

Both of our denominations have gone through the "liberal" era; we are now "beyond" it and it has added its catharsis, especially, in regard to Biblical literalism. We are both comparatively free of Biblical fundamentalism. We both agree that Scripture is *interpretative* of Jesus Christ as God's Word to man. Both of us agree that creeds are interpretations of the Biblical events (though you would say, and I personally would agree, "authoritative interpretation of the essential truth taught in the Holy Scripture" (Constitution-By-Laws Pt. I:3).

We Congregationalists have not always been as averse to creeds as our more recent laxity in this respect would indicate. Prof. Roland Bainton in a recent article in the *Christian Century* wrote:

"If we should revert to a written statement through a union with the Evangelical and Reformed Church, we should merely be reviving the custom which prevailed throughout the longer part of our history."[9] He was speaking of the period from the Westminster Confession (1648) to the Kansas City Statement of Faith (1913).

Both Prof. Daniel Jenkins and Dr. Walter Marshall Horton agree and testify that we have just come through a period of drifting and confusion.[10] Actually, all of the Churches (and denominations) have gone through this "time of troubles," especially those that have taken seriously Biblical criticism and theological reinterpretation.

Moreover, if we would truly proclaim the Word to our generation, we must have an educated, scholarly, competent ministry to do this. There is agreement here also (Congregationalists rank fourth in terms of an educated ministry, i.e., college and seminary training; Lutherans rank first). Certainly we need Biblical heralds—men who can "discern the signs of the times" and who also know the "mind of the Great Church" and can interpret it to congregations committed to their care. There is no place for a sectarian or parochial mentality in this age.

FOOTNOTES

1. cf. Paul Tillich, *The Protestant Era,* (University of Chicago, 1948).
2. cf. the paper by Dr. George W. Richards in *The Nature of the Church,* a Report of the American Theological Committee, (1945) p. 29.
3. Carl Schneider, *"The Genius of the Evangelical Synod of North America,"* (June 1940) p. 3.
4. cf. Roland Bainton, *The Reformation in the 16th Century,* or the older work of T. M. Lindsay.
5. Carl Schneider, "The Genius of the Reformed Church in the United States," an article in the *Journal of Religion,* January 1935. I am indebted to Dr. Schneider for most of the materials for this background history.
6. Schneider, ibid, p. 34.
7. Daniel Jenkins, *Congregationalism: A Restatement* (1954) p. 56 Creeds are put forward as "acts of witness," says Prof. Jenkins.
8. cf. K. Barth, *The Word of God and the Word of Man* (English Translation 1925 by D. Horton); E. Brunner, *The Theology of Crisis* (1929); Reinhold Niebuhr, *Beyond Tragedy* and *Discerning the Signs of the Times.*
9. *The Christian Century,* February 24, 1954, "Is Congregationalism Sectarian?"
10. Jenkins, *Congregationalism: A Restatement,* pp. 19-20, and Horton et al. in *The Nature of the Church*—Statement on the Congregational Christian Church.

The Holy Merriment

by ARNOLD KENSETH

LO, CHRIST IS WAKING, cradled in
Our loneliness, our world of night:
God-head kinged low as human sin,
Child homaged high as angeled light.

Wandering, wondering, now let all,
Through unploughed weather's burst and blow,
Harry ourselves to crib and stall,
To heaven cabined in the snow.

Let all astonished souls delight,
Have bones and ears to risk His mirth,
The holy laughter shaking night
Where God is coming into birth:

In gnarled dark death on shepherds' faces
Spacious with longing for a King,
Bold with the girth of given graces
When heaven opens and angels sing;

In Mary motionless, adrift,
Candled beside the Lamb of danger,
Periled to mother-love the Gift,
The Cross incarnate in the manger;

In donkey, sparrows, soft-eyed ox,
Whose shuffle, whirl-wings, ancient nod,
Nuzzle and beak the Paradox:
The timeless Man in tethered God;

In Joseph darkly panicked, cheated,
Unfathered by the Fatherhood
That wills his goodness be defeated
Before the Will that wills the Good.

Declaring, adoring, all the world
Has come to be unworlded where
Levelling, loving, God has hurled
His whirlwind Truth in still, small Care

To gale down pride to stable straw,
Winnow our righteousness to chaff,
Wing-fold our grief, dove-warm and thaw
Our winter fears in Christ's bright laugh.

All's well here. The lost sons are found.
Good-will, God's love is running sent.
All, all are savioured, all dance round
The Child in holy merriment.

The poet is Minister at South Amherst, Mass.

RECOMMENDED READING

A list and commentary prepared by THE ASSOCIATES IN READING OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE MINISTRY, CONGREGATIONAL CHRISTIAN CHURCHES.

PAPER BACKS AND THE LOCAL CHURCH

Paper back books, selling for a little less to a little more than a dollar, are a phenomena of our present culture and may well become a great boon for the local church. For now the infinite variety of titles include many of the classics of the Christian Faith and place at our disposal many of the recent "musts" for minister and parish which could not be afforded in the cloth-bound edition.

One of the problems we face as parish parsons, however, is how we shall come to know about the appropriate titles. There are so many of them. How can we know if a particular book is available in paper back? It is expected that catalogues, such as the Pilgrim Press catalogue, will be helpful to us in this regard in the near future.

In the meantime your Associates in Reading would like to call your attention to a significant series and to mention a few other books. It is hoped that this listing will be helpful not only in itself but also by way of illustration of what is available to us at reasonable cost.

The Anchor Series of the Doubleday Publishing Co. has put out **The Dead Sea Scrolls** by Gastor. It consists of the actual text of the Dead Sea Scrolls. It sells for ninety-five cents.

Then I hope you know of the Living Age Books published by Meridian Books and carrying the following titles:

An Interpretation of Christian Ethics by Reinhold Niebuhr
The Mind of the Maker by Dorothy L. Sayers
Christian Mysticism by W. R. Inge
Primitive Christianity in Its Contemporary Setting by Rudolf Bultmann
The Descent of the Dove by Charles Williams
The Religious Situation by Paul Tillich

Harper Torchlights has made a significant contribution by publishing for $1.25 H. Richard Niebuhr's **Christ and Culture.** Morton Scott Enslin's books and Kierkegaard's **Purity of Heart** are also available in this series.

It may well be that with the appearance of these paper backs, the establishment of a local church bookstore will become a feasible venture. Certainly this phenomenon will be helpful to the pocketbooks of clergymen who are always "loaning" from their own personal libraries.

Primary List

The Idea of Revelation in Recent Thought by John Baillie, Columbia, $3.00.

When the times are out of joint and existence seems meaningless, man needs more than the old philosophies and religion which simply relate him to the same old situations. Christianity is the "good news" (53) that can bring both "transformation and renewal" (42) into the practical, work-a-day world of men. Here in the "Mighty Acts of God" (Chap. II) we find the best and deepest clue to the mystery of life.

Dr. Baillie moves through the "easy answer" to revelation given by Thomas Aquinas into "recent thought," bringing together a vast number of viewpoints into a clear, warm, and marvellous study of "revelation," quoting both from familiar and some unfamiliar scholars.

He moves from "trust" to "assent" (91) in defining "faith" but proceeds to "faith as obedience" (134) and says we need "nothing more." Ultimately man's solution to his dilemma is theological. And the answer is God in Christ.

A good book. A great book. A *must* book!

The Living of These Days—An Autobiography of Harry Emerson Fosdick, Harper and Bros., N. Y., $4.00.

Probably no current religious book will have a wider reading public than this autobiography of Dr. Fosdick. Laymen past the age of forty who have been helped by Fosdick's books and radio ministry will turn to it eagerly. Ministers for whom Fosdick was their chief contemporary inspiration and who cheered on the side-lines during the controversies of the twenties will read it with the relish that a war veteran reads his general's memoirs.

But the most important reading group will be younger ministers and theological students. Here they learn what the shouting was all about. Here they discover that the social gospel was far from a natural—it had to be won at great cost. Here they learn their debt to liberalism—the insistence on intellectual honesty which has made our current re-birth of theological interest possible.

Fosdick emerges from this book for even his critics not as a dated museum piece but the courageous man of God who dealt with the real ills of his day as pastor, teacher and prophet. Your committee was unanimous in its selection for the primary list.

The Grandeur and Misery of Man by David E. Roberts, Oxford Press, $3.00.

David Roberts died in 1955 when he was in his early forties, but during his all too brief career he had a remarkable impact upon his students at Union Theological Seminary where he was Professor of the Philosophy of Religion and Dean of Students.

Now we have a posthumous publication of some of his sermons and for the preacher who wants to be preached to rather than helped in the preparation of his own sermons, this book is a Godsend. As one reads these sermons he forgets to analyze and begins to listen. He stops making notes and begins to pray. For here in this author is a preacher who never stands aloof from mankind; who, preaching to his own condition, communicates to all who confess their true condition.

In this book one comes face to face with a mortal combat where one sings the words of a hymn like "ein feste berg" and means it or he dies.

At the conclusion of each sermon is a prayer and I would quote from the one following "Deep Sorrow and Deep Joy." ". . . so unite us with Thyself in love and confidence that whatsoever Thou bestowest we may gratefully use, whatsoever Thou withholdest we may cheerfully resign, and whatsoever Thou commandest we may diligently perform."

Faith, Reason, and Existence by John A. Hutchison, Oxford University Press, $4.50.

Many of us ministers have a tendency to become disciples of particular theological slants, or devotees of one theological writer. We become enraptured with a facile pen or the repetitious pronouncements of a single voice.

This book is recommended because it is an objective study of numerous voices and current theologies. A careful reading of it, together with even a moderate use of the bibliographies listed at the end of each chapter, will give a minister a balanced perspective of what is happening in contemporary Christian theology.

The subtitle is somewhat misleading. It is not an introduction to contemporary philosophy of religion—a very important matter in view of the world situation, for it does not attempt a portrayal of non-Christian religious thinking except by cursory references.

The author, Professor of Religion at Columbia University, has succeeded in restraining the inclination to project his own views into the discussion (especially on controversial issues). The critical passages are sympathetic, yet with distinct objectivity.

The book lends itself admirably to discussion groups.

Here is an excellent method of studying contemporary religion in its relation to total contemporary life.

Supplementary List

The New Being by Paul Tillich, Scribners, $2.75.

A volume of twenty-four sermons by the eminent Professor of Philosophical Theology at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. The book has three main divisions: "The New Being as Love," "The New Being as Freedom," and "The New Being as Fulfillment." Here is the vigorous theology of Tillich cast into the sermon form, resulting in a volume of persuasive power.

Natural Religion and Christian Theology by A. Victor Murray—Harper and Bros., N. Y., $3.50.

The President of Chestnut College has written many books helpful to the modern mind in dealing with practical issues from a sustained Christian viewpoint. The present volume is no exception. It is warmly commended for its forthright and clearly expressed reports on Christian Theology approached through psychology and anthropology—although the author modestly calls it "an introductory study."

The Hymnody of the Christian Church by Louis F. Benson, John Knox Press, Richmond, Va., $4.50.

This Primer of Hymnology is frankly a reprint of the book first published in 1927 and now demanded in a reprint in reponse to the rising

tide of interest in hymns and church music. It ought to be in every minister's library. Dr. Benson is himself a hymn writer and our greatest authority in the field.

An Historian's Approach to Religion by Arnold Toynbee, Oxford University Press, $5.00.

This controversial book dramatically points up the idols of man's worship which have returned to the contemporary scene. It removes rose-colored glasses on the history of Christian missions and makes one rethink the problem of fanaticism in the faiths which were cradled in the Middle East. After reading, this book will become a permanent reference book.

The Great Realities by Samuel H. Miller, Harper, $2.50.

The Great Realities—Man, God, Prayer, Worship, Faith, Love and Peace—are portrayed vividly for those who desire the real heights and depths of knowledge and belief, be he minister, laywoman or layman.

Men on Their Knees by Kenneth O. Eaton, Abingdon, $1.75.

A real help for triumphant living. It is a guide book into the chamber of God's presence under the leadership, through prayer, of Simeon, the Publican, the Pharisee, Paul, Stephen, Jesus and the Early Church. It will teach "how to pray."

The Communication of the Christian Faith by Hendrick Kraemer, Westminster Press, $2.50.

This informative and sobering series of lectures delivered at Knox College, Toronto, early in 1956 deserve the attention of all serious churchmen. From the author's knowledge of church history, his awareness of the present sociological situation in the world today and his fearless analysis of the church's failure to communicate the Gospel to this generation, the reader will come to appreciate the problem and will be encouraged and inspired to do something about it.

Preaching and the New Reformation by Truman B. Douglass, Harper & Bros., N. Y., $2.50.

The author has chosen in the 1956 Lyman Beecher lectures to go outside the usual themes. The implications and consequences of the Ecumenical Movement for the parish preacher is his particular theme. Insisting that this "New Reformation" concerns the local minister and the ordinary congregation more than anybody else, he makes an excellent case for his thesis. Written with vigor and often great beauty.

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COMMENT—(*Continued from page 2*)

Communion

should be a complete service, yes! It should not be tacked on as an afterthought. On the other hand, the service without Communion should not be condemned to incompleteness by the omission of the "inevitable" (but not usually happening) climax. We need not have twelve weeks of services chopped off before their fulfillment just to have a unified Communion service. One answer might be more frequent Communion, but I am also convinced that another answer is to have basically different services on Communion Sunday and other Sundays, the one a complete Communion service and the other and equally unified Service of the Word without Communion.

Secondly, Mr. Coe is concerned to emphasize "that God is taking the stuff of our common life and using it as the instrument of His active presence." Excellent. This can be done in two ways. First, one should *always* use bread. The use of wafers distorts the meaning in two ways: they are not out of our common life, and they are not broken. Bread is important to the service precisely because it is the "staff of life" in addition to being part of the means of grace and because it can represent not only the body, but the *broken* body. Second, we may recognize the use of the common things of life by using the prayer from the *Didache* in connection with the distribution of the bread, which reads in part, ". . . this piece of bread, which was once scattered across the fields as wheat . . .". Having recognized the common source of the elements in these ways, we may then feel free not to commit the error of bringing the elements in during the course of the service. For the emphasis on the use of the common things of life is secondary to the fact that these are God's great gifts of grace ("these Thine own gifts of bread and wine" as one prayer of consecration puts it). Because the Sacrament is above all the gift of God, we should not bring it in as if it were our gift on which He merely overlays a blessing.

Despite these disagreements, I am definitely in accord with the larger concern of the articles that the Supper is more than just a memorial, it is a means of grace, and we ought to celebrate it so as to make this clear. Congratulations on this article, and give us more like it!

KEITH E. HERREMAN
Baldwin, Wisconsin

Balm for Our Gilead

The October 1956 issue of THE MINISTER'S QUARTERLY was superb! No other word will do. The article by Harland G. Lewis was both challenging and stimulating . . . one of the finest things I've been privileged to read in a long time . . . and it speaks well for our Congreational-Christian fellowship! And I was profoundly moved by Gaius Glenn Atkins' last offering. (It seems, somehow, impossible we shall hear his voice no more—a great loss. And I thank God for the richness he poured out from his soul and mind to enrich us.)

Arnold Kenseth, in my humble opinion at least, has established himself as the poet laureate of Congregationalism. He goes very deep indeed; and he sets those of us who love poetry soaring. "A Song of Grace" is beautiful, and I want to express my gratitude to you for including it. Never let an issue go by without at least one poem. After all, we have had our poets—among them Katharine Lee Bates and Jay Stocking. (I don't know if we can include Robert Frost and Robert Francis or not.)

I rejoice in the rejuenated QUARTERLY. And if it is any balm in your own peculiar Gilead, the publication is meeting a long-felt need. God bless you in your work.

ROBERT C. YOH
The Southern Union College
Wadley, Alabama

COMMENT—(*Continued from page 35*)

On "Communion"

Without apology, the Communion Service means to me a simple act of remembrance — is not this what Paul thought he "received from the Lord"? When we hold a Communion Service (in my present church twice yearly), it is always a Service of Remembrance—remembering dramatically the Sacrifice of our Lord Christ, his Loyalty, devotion to which led him to the sacrificial altar, his holy Leadership, our Fellowship in him; we remember him thus dramatically as the Suffering Servant of the Lord, withholding not one whit of himself in his devotion to his divine mission.

Nor do I arrogate to myself any priestly function or authority—I believe firmly in the Protestant doctrine of "the priesthood of all believers," and in our Communion Service the people are called to utter silence in which each offers from his heart his own prayer of consecration; it is my conviction that this prayer is infinitely more efficacious than any utterance of mine could possibly be.

Wine, or simply grape juice? Why raise the question? The first Communion service I ever participated in was in a church too poor to buy either—the elements were scraps of bread and clear water. I remember it as one of the most moving of all the Communion Services I have had a part in since that time.

As I read this discussions I am led to wonder anew if the Quakers do not have the real answer: make it purely a spiritual matter, dispensing with the physical elements altogether, as coming between us and the real meaning of what Jesus asked us to do.

Surely I am not alone in thus turning aside from what is increasingly thought to be "*proper*", to hold fast to what is the *natural* interpretation?

WALTER H. RILEY,
Texarkana, Ark.-Tex.

A Request

Your recent articles on the sacraments have been very helpful. Have you considered an article on the marriage service? I am in total ignorance as to why we of the Protestant tradition do not consider the marriage service a sacrament. Certainly it is an act of creation under God. I would certainly be interested in an article on the subject.

CALVIN HAY,
Wessington Springs,
South Dakota

On "Evangelism"

Harland G. Lewis labors like the proverbial elephant, and a whole litter of mice lay stillborn across six pages of print . . . grace, sin, redemption, salvation, the Church, the Bible, God, Christ, freedom, authority, the Gospel, the devil, the Cross, faith, and mission.

World population is a full three-quarters non-Christian and is not about to become Christian after 2,000 years of Christian world mission. This dominant world majority includes living, not dead, faiths. For the record, these faiths have Brahma, Gautama, Abraham, Mohammed, Marx, Compte, and Freud, and we do not.

Yet Lewis would have his pretentious literary hook, "What justifies our Christian mission to other cultures and faiths . . . ," and his illiterate Christian piety too, "I would speak within the bonds of the Covenant, in the family of faith . . ."

The only evangelistic imperative I know is God. His orders of truth, His marvelous power, His capacity to humble and redeem, His mysteries are my primary responsibilities as a Congregational-Christian minister in good standing. Other cultures and faiths understand and respect this kind of ordination and vocation. So, too, does my parish, my non-Congregational Christian friends, and my ordination committee of 1950.

GORDON DALBECK
San Bernardino, Calif.